

Message Text

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ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-11 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-07 PA-04 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-03 SS-20

USIA-15 OMB-01 EB-11 FRB-03 CIEP-03 DRC-01 SAM-01

FAA-00 DOTE-00 /110 W

----- 003969

R 081020Z AUG 74

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3815

INFO AMCONSUL HONG KONG

AMEMBASSY MANILA

USLO PEKING

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 10347

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, ETRN, TW, JA, CH

SUBJECT: TAIWAN-JAPAN RELATIONS

REF: A) TOKYO 6833 B) TAIPEI 4908 (NOTAL)

SUMMARY: WE ARE LESS OPTIMISTIC THAN EMBASSY TAIPEI'S SOURCES THAT THERE IS YET MUCH REAL SUBSTANCE BEHIND FLURRY OF PRESS SPECULATION DURING PAST WEEK SUGGESTING MOVEMENT IN TAIWAN-JAPAN RELATIONS. WHILE JAPAN WOULD LIKE BREAKTHROUGH TO IMPROVE RELATIONS, PRESS STORIES APPARENTLY INCLUDE MUCH SPECULATION AND SUBJECTIVE READING OF SITUATION. END SUMMARY.

1. FLURRY OF PRESS STORIES FOR PAST WEEK SUGGESTING POSSIBLE IMPROVEMENT IN RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND TAIWAN APPARENTLY CONTAIN CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF
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SPECULATION. WHILE JAPAN WOULD WELCOME IMPROVEMENT,

INCLUDING EARLY RESTORATION OF AIR LINK, OUR READING OF SUBSTANCE BEHIND REPORTS IS LESS BULLISH THAN SOME OF EMBASSY TAIPEI'S SOURCES CITED IN REF B.

2. AS FOR PRESS STORIES ON JAPANESE VISITORS TO TAIWAN, FONOFF CHINA DIV DEP DIRECTOR OGURA TOLD EMBASSY THAT DEP DIRGEN PM'S OFFICE KEIZO OBUCHI'S VISIT TO TAIWAN JULY 1-2 AND DIETMAN FUNADA'S PROJECTED VISIT SEPTEMBER 8 WERE PRIVATE AND NOT AT INSTIGATION OF GOJ, EVEN THOUGH OBUCHI DISCUSSED STOPOVER WITH PM TANAKA AND FONMIN OHIRA BEFORE GOING. WHILE NOT RULING OUT THAT FUNADA MIGHT SEE ROC LEADERS, OGURA STRESSED PRIVATE NATURE OF FUNADA'S VISIT TO ATTEND SYMPOSIUM, AND EXPRESSED NO OPTIMISM ON EARLY RESTORATION OF AIR LINK.

3. ALTHOUGH GOJ EARNESTLY SEEKS FORMULA FOR "OVERCOMING EFFECTS" OF OHIRA'S STATEMENT, GOJ DOES NOT YET SEEM TO HAVE FOUND FORMULA. SENIOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS REPORTER FOR YOMIURI HIRANO ATTENDED PRESS BACKGROUNDER WHERE FONOFF OFFICIAL REPORTEDLY SAID OHIRA'S STATEMENT WAS "MATTER OF PAST". HIRANO TOLD EMBASSY YOMIURI ARTICLE SAYING STATEMENT WAS "MATTER OF PAST" WAS WRITTEN BY INEXPERIENCED REPORTER AND INACCURATELY REPORTED WHAT WAS SAID. ACCORDING TO HIRANO, FONOFF OFFICIAL SAID, "IF TAIWAN WISHES TO CONSIDER OHIRA STATEMENT AS MATTER OF PAST, THEN WE CAN MAKE PROGRESS IN RESTORING AIR LINK". LATER PRESS REPORTS QUOTING VICE FONMIN TOGO TO EFFECT THAT GOJ COULD NOT RETRACT OHIRA'S STATEMENT WERE CORRECT AND CONFIRMED TO US BY OGURA.

4. AS INTERCHANGE ASSN'S KOMA SUGGESTED TO EMBASSY TAIPEI, OGURA SAID THAT FINDING APPROPRIATE EX-AMBASSADOR, FINDING APPROPRIATE COUNSELOR/POLITICAL OFFICER TO ACCOMPANY AND ADVISE AMBASSADOR, OBTAINING APPROPRIATE HOUSING IN TAIPEI, AND BUDGETARY QUESTIONS MUST ALL BE RESOLVED BEFORE TOKYO'S REPRESENTATION IN TAIPEI COULD BE UPGRADED. OGURA SUSPECTS THIS WILL TAKE SOME TIME TO ACCOMPLISH.
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5. COMMENT KNOWING THAT OBUCHI DISCUSSED TAIWAN STOPOVER WITH PM AND FONMIN PRIOR TO GOING, WE ASSUME THAT HE (AND FUNADA) AS WELL HAVE BORNE MESSAGES FROM GOJ LEADERS. HOWEVER, WHILE GOJ UNDOUBTEDLY IS SEARCHING FOR WAYS TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN, WE SEE NO REAL SUBSTANCE YET BEHIND FLURRY OF REPORTS. FONOFF BACKGROUNDER WHICH SPAWNED OPTIMISM MAY HAVE BEEN DELIBERATELY MISLEADING AND TAIPEI MAY HAVE

CHOSEN TO PLAY REMARKS AS "CONCILIATORY" GESTURE FROM TOKYO.
EMBASSY TAIPEI POINTED OUT IN EARLY STAGES BEFORE
AIR BREAK (TAIPEI 1435) THAT IF CHIANG CHING-KUO CHOSE
HE COULD PLAY JAPAN'S ACTIONS (OHIRA'S STATEMENT) EITHER WAY
HE WISHED. SAME PROBABLY HOLDS NOW.
HODGSON

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